

CLAW & FANG

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This issue of CLAW & FANG is dedicated to Douglas A. Lawson. This graduate student at the University of California at Berkeley discovered the fossil remains of the largest known creature ever to fly. The as yet unnamed extinct winged reptile had an estimated wingspan of 51 feet. This was twice as wide as the wingspan of the biggest previously known pterodactyl (winged reptile), and nearly six times the wingspan of the condor, the largest flying bird now alive. This discovery has rekindled an old debate among Paleontologists on whether flying reptiles really flew under their own power by flapping their wings or merely climbed up onto high perches and leaped into air currents to soar like gliders. One scientist said that the huge size of this new find made improbable the theory that it was able to rise into the air under its own wingpower. Where was this latest find made? Why, in Texas, of course. Shucks, m'am, it's nothing but a petrified Texas hummingbird.....with all that hot air, who needs flapping?

SO WHAT ELSE IS NEW?

1. THERE'S GOOD NEWS AND THERE'S BAD NEWS. First the good news. As you can see, CLAW & FANG has gone mimeo. Now, the best gamezine in East Sacramento is even better. More copies, more legible printing, more and different features coming up.

The bad news? Well, they don't give these mimeographs away. Paper has gone up. Masters are more expensive. I'm afraid to price staples. As a consequence, CLAW & FANG is going up. The new subscription rate will be 12 issues for three dollars. But to be fair and give everyone a chance to save money, the increase will not be effective until May 1. Any subscription (up to a year) purchased before May 1 will be honored at the present rate until the sub runs out.

2. DIPLOMACY SNACKS. Diplomacy players have to eat and with that as justification, I am starting a food column next issue. These will be primarily about baked goods--breads and desserts. Things that you should enjoy making and will certainly enjoy eating. Please feel free to send in your personal favorites. The first column will be by Michael Ward on sourdough.

3. GAME OPENINGS. I need just one more player to get the next game started. The Guest Gamemaster for this one will be Steve Brooks. After this one is filled I have another one lined up with three people ready to go into it.

4. MENSA GAME NEWS. MENSA needs but 2 more players to get underway. The Guest GM for this is David Reynolds.

5. BOARDMAN NUMBER AWARDED. Dave Forte's Guest GM game has a Boardman Number--1975V as in Victory (see page 2). This was C&F #16. This was erroneously listed as C&F #15 in the last issue. Also, in the last issue, I'm glad none of you were taken in by the deadline in three games being put as May 16 instead of March 16. These were spiteful tricks perpetrated by my duplicator that knew it was soon to be replaced.

6. VICTORY STATEMENTS, ETC. The wrapup on 1973AY won by Dave Forte is on page 5. Due to space limitations the wrapup on 1973BN is delayed until next issue.

1975N

GAMEMASTER: Doug McMullin, Box 26, Moor Rd, RR #2, Courtenay, B.C. Canada V9N 5M9
SPRING 1901

ALL MOVES SUCCEED, BUT HOW MANY STABS?????

AUSTRIA Tom Burkacki: (3) A Vic-Boh*, A Bud-Ser*, F Tri-Alb*

ENGLAND Wayne Callahan: (3) A Lvp-Yor*, F Lon-EngC*, F Edi-NthS*

FRANCE David Weitz: (3) A Par-Pic*, A Mar-Bur*, F Bro-MAO*

GERMANY Charles Neal? (3) NMR NOU A Mun-Ruhr*, A Ber-Kiel*, F Kiel-Hol*

ITALY Tim Tilson? (3) NMR NOU A Ven* H, A Rome-Apu*, F Nap-Ion*

RUSSIA Gary Burco: (4) A Mos-Ukr*, A War-Gal*, F Sev-Bla*, F StP(sc)-Both*

TURKEY Alan Cathcart: (3) A Con-Bul*, A Smy* H, F Ank-Con*

Fall 1901 orders are due Wednesday, April 9th. Canadian postal conditions may account for misses by Italy and Germany. Neutral orders were used. Just in case, I am asking for standby orders for Germany from Burt Labelle (Fang of the Year) Forest Park #23, Biddeford, Maine 04005 and for Italy from Steve Peluso, 955 Westcott, Apt 1, Houston, Tex 77007.

For those people that don't know, it takes 5 days at the best for letters to get here. If you are unlucky, it has been known to take 6 days (20% of the time), 7 days (4% of the time), or even 10 days (extremely rare). (I recommend airmail ...Ed)

PRESS

BUDAPEST: Count Burkacula has recently marketed a new poison set, for all you potential criminals. The poison kit includes the following items: a poison penknife for carving initials in someone's back, a John Dean cuckoo clock, an autographed edition of "Fanging for Fun", a book written by the Fangmaster, and a record of funeral marches. All of this for the mere price of two supply centers, or 8 pints of blood.

COURTENAY: (To Alan Cathcart:) I got this GM role through the good graces of Fangmaster. I took it on because its something I should learn to do. GMing provides fun for others while I've gotten tired of getting into games (playing them from scratch) that I just don't. Maybe in a year I'll regain heart.

1975N

GAMEMASTER: Dave Forte, Apt 4A, 601 West 113th St., New York, N.Y. 10025

SPRING 1901

RUSSIANS COLONIZE NORTH; TURKS PUT DOWN REVOLT IN ARMENIA; ALSACE-LORRAINE IN DISPUTE

AUSTRIA Mike Willemsen: (3) F Tri-Alb*, A Vic-Tri*, A Bud-Ser*

ENGLAND Joel Klein: (3) F Edi-Nwg*, F Lon-Nth*, A Liv-Yor*

FRANCE Bill Hanagan: (3) F Bro-MAO*, A Par*-Bur, A Mar-Spa*

GERMANY Edward Karlinski: (3) A Ber-Kiel*, A Mun*-Bur, F Kiel-Den*

ITALY David Nelson: (3) A Ven*H, A Rom-Tus*, F Nap-Tyrr*

RUSSIA Steve Cartier: (4) F StP(sc)-Both*, A Mos-StP*, A War-Lvn*, F Sev-Rum*

TURKEY Len Lakofka: (3) F Ank-Bla*, A Smy-Arm*, A Con-Bul*

Fall 1901 orders are due Wednesday, April 9.

PRESS

ROMA: Tunis, here I come.

FORT NEW YORK: Is the press worth it? Maybe we should translate into Italian to spice it up. What would it be? "Tunisia, Vendiamo" (?)

1974GM

I have not heard anything from Larry Rubinow in over a month. Please resubmit your Fall 1902 orders to me by April 1st. I'm putting you on your honor to resubmit the same orders that you did before.

ERIC'S BAG OF TRICKS
by Eric Verheiden

The Convoyed Attack

Used properly, the convoyed attack can be one of the most versatile tactics available to the experienced player.

The convoy is the only means whereby two units can be directly exchanged:

France: A Spa-Por via F Mid, F Mid C A Spa-Por, F Por-Spa(sc). Players will note the alternative procedure (A Spa-Por, F Por-Mid, F Mid-Spa(sc)) could be considerably riskier in some situations.

The convoy, and particularly the multiple convoy, is one of the fastest ways to bring up reinforcements on a given front. This fact, and the fact that the reinforcements are armies rather than fleets, can be particularly useful at times. For instance, in the classic French stab against England:

France: A Gas-Cly, F Mid & F MAt C A Gas-Cly. This places a unit on the English mainland which is almost impossible to destroy and very frequently enables the French to make short work of the attack. This is one of the major reasons (vulnerability to convoyed army attack) that England is considered a poor defensive country.

The convoyed attack enables a player to launch an attack through a space which may itself be under attack. For instance:

England: A Edi-Den, F Nth C A Edi-Den, A Swe S A Edi-Den, F Lon S F Nth

Germany: F Den-Nth /d/, F Hol S F Den-Nth

Players will note that a direct attack could easily fail with a good German guess. But the convoyed attack must succeed.

As a surprise tactic, the convoyed attack can be invaluable. For instance, in one of my current games (as England), I ordered ... but a German antagonist:

England: F Edi S F Nth, A Nwy-Hol, F Nth C A Nwy-Hol

Germany: F Hel-Nth, A Den-Swe, F Ska S A Den-Swe, A Bel H, A Pru-Lvn, A Sil-Pru, A Mun-Sil

As it turned out, I was able to hold Norway in the fall and thereby was able to build, though not for Holland, my army was dislodged to Kiel! Although the outcome is uncertain as yet, this tactic and the sudden resulting weakness in the German position may have enable me to turn Germany's one ally (France) against him, in which case the weak replacement position I took on initially would now be one with real possibilities.

Finally, some of the peculiar properties of the convoy order may, as in Spring 1905 of 1974CZ, enable one to use what might be called the "self-enforcing agreement". Here, I offered Turkey Bulgaria in return for his support against the Anglo-Germans. However, I did not want to see his army in Bulgaria since it would leave me vulnerable to a subsequent (or even simultaneous) Turkish stab. Hence I insisted that he take Bulgaria with the fleet. If he had done so, my A Bulgaria, being unable to cut a support given against itself, would have been forced to retreat as agreed. If however Turkey took Bulgaria with the army, then the convoy would succeed and by army in Constantinople would provide ample compensation for the stab.

* * * * *

"Dear Fangmaster: What is a Schlickbernd?"

A Schlickbernd is a subspecies of Homo sapiens. His lair is in a dungeon (of his own design) in Long Beach, Calif. When he is not writing nasty press (or inventing new monsters for his dungeon) he cranks out a fair to middling gamesino, POLCTESME.

(I do not make these "Dear Fangmaster..." questions up--including this one. Send in your questions to be answered.)

I know you're not running the American Journal of Game Theory, but I couldn't resist:

MORE GAME THEORY

or

HAS THE FANGMASTER FINALLY BITTEN OFF MORE THAN HE CAN SHRED?

by Alan Cathcart

I take issue with the application of game theory to Diplomacy in the mechanics, which are necessarily somewhat subjective; but also in the fundamental assumption on which the entire theory is based. Game theory assumes that every player seeks to minimize his opponent's gains (i.e., minimize his own losses) rather than maximize his own gains. This reflects a very conservative gaming philosophy; stated another way, it holds that nobody ever gambles against the odds. If everybody in Diplomacy thought that way strategically, then the infinite 7-dimensional matrix which combines all possible strategies would always reach a saddlepoint in 1900--with a 7-way draw. Nobody has ever advocated such a result to me in my short career, and I believe that as a group we reject that fundamental axiom of game theory. Certainly we rely on it in some situations, but it is not an invariable rule.

What it boils down to, I think, is that game theory applies quite well to everything but games; the game theory axiom probably describes the behavior of mutual fund managers, for example, or United States Senators (but what explains Las Vegas?). Where the "players" have something substantial to lose, human nature dictates the safest course. But in a true game, very little is at stake. The principal goal is enjoyment, the second, victory; survival is a weak third at best. Yet the game theory axiom would require everyone to play for survival, if any other more ambitious course would risk destruction. One might even go so far as to speculate that we play games in order to escape the fundamental axiom--that our gambler's instinct, suppressed in the real world, finds grandiose expression in the safest manner when we stake the empty fortunes of an imaginary empire on the dice of war.

It may be said in reply that the game theory model can assimilate my arguments by assigning numerical values to the enjoyment, etc. possibilities of particular strategies and incorporating them into the matrix. Maybe so, though my personal feeling is that enjoyment and game "success" are to some extent incommensurable. More probably we would wind up deciding what we wanted to do and constructing a matrix accordingly--obviously a circular exercise.

All of this, of course, relates primarily to grand strategy. I do not deny that game theory has tactical value, as earlier articles have shown. Whatever our ultimate purpose, most of us play to win in tactical situations where one player's gain is another's loss. Even here, however, a satisfactory matrix can only be created with great care. Imagine this simple if improbable scenario on some mythical Fall turn: England controls Nwy, Russia StP; neither controls Swo. England has A Nwy and Russia has A Fin, and no other units are close enough to matter. Each has 3 likely orders. For England: (1) Swo, (2) StP, (3) H. For Russia: (1) Swo, (2) StP, (3) Nwy. An uncautious English player might assume that since supply centers are the name of the game, an appropriate measure of his success would be the number of English controlled supply centers minus the number controlled by Russia at the end of the turn. This payoff matrix would result

		Russian Strategy							
		1	2	3			1	3	min
English Strategy	/1/	0	1	-1	or	/1/	0	-1	-1
	/2/	1	0	0		/2/	1	0	0
	/3/	-1	0	0		max	1	0	0

The second matrix, which results from the elimination of dominated strategies,
(continued on page 5)

appears to have a saddlepoint in the lower right hand corner. Which means the English player will always march confidently and unopposed into StP, while Russia slyly makes off with Nwy.

Bull!

It is unlikely that Russia would be content to trade Nwy for StP. What happened: Once again a basic assumption has failed; this time, that all supply centers are equal. Actually, if Swe and Nwy are worth 1, StP is probably worth $1\frac{1}{2}$ or so to either player. Using those assumptions, and eliminating English 3 which again is dominated, (and Russia 1, which is dominated if England never plays 3) we get this payoff matrix:

		2	3	min
/1/		$\frac{1}{2}$	$-\frac{1}{2}$	$-\frac{1}{2}$
/2/		$-\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$-\frac{1}{2}$
	max	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	

This has no saddlepoint and therefore demands a mixed strategy. While I won't go through the arithmetic necessary to arrive at such a strategy, the important point is that game theory only helps when you're aware of its limitations, both in theory and in application.

(If you think the game theory articles stop here, you're wrong. Next issue Tom McCloud. returns.)

1073AY

THE SUPPLY CENTER CHART

	00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12	13	14
AUSTRIA	3	5	5	4	2	2	2	2	2	-					
ENGLAND	3	4	6	6	7	7	7	8	8	9	7	7	7	8	8
FRANCE	3	4	4	5	6	7	7	7	7	8	7	7	6	5	4
GERMANY	3	4	4	4	3	2	2	2	2	1	1	-			
ITALY	3	5	5	4	3	1	1	-							
RUSSIA	4	4	5	5	6	6	6	5	5	5	7	8	8	7*	7
TURKEY	3	5	5	6	7	9*	9	10	10	11	12	12	13	14	15

THE PLAYERS

AUSTRIA: Don Carlton (out Fall 09) ENGLAND: Dewey Boyer (dro Sp 11) Mark Magnotte
 FRANCE: Jim Bumpus GERMANY: Bruce Kindig (out Fall 11)
 ITALY: Alan Zahm (out Fall 07) RUSSIA: David Sleight
 TURKEY: David Forte (victory by concession Sp 1915)

THE WINNER'S STATEMENT

This first win in my first Diplomacy-by-mail game came about primarily through luck and the loyalty of an ally, and secondarily through diplomacy and tactics. The pattern of the game was classical. In the Opening Game, a Franco-British alliance moved against Germany, while a slowly strengthening alliance of Russia and Turkey edged against Austria. Italy moved on France thus triggering a subsidiary mutual help agreement between France and Turkey.

With Austria and Germany seemingly doomed, the Middle Game consisted of intensive negotiations between France and Turkey over the eventual spoils of Italy and possible switching of allies. This negotiation disproved the quantitative analysts view that the two countries with the most contacts will be allies. In fact, the negotiations merely showed that France and Turkey were too wedded to each other's allies

(continued overleaf)

SUMMER 1905: France A MAO R Per

1974CZ

FALL 1905

SCHLICKBERND'S HUNS FINALLY CAPTURE WARSAU WITH THE AID OF THE LAST GOTHIC HORDE, AN ENGLISH SERVICE PLATOON, AND POLISH COWARDICE.

AUSTRIA Eric Verheiden: (7) F Ion-EMed*, A Gal* S A Tyro-Boh, A Bul* S A Rum, A Ukr*-Sev, A Rum* S A Ukr-Sev, A Ser* S A Bul, A Tyro-Boh*

CENTERS: Tri, Bud, Gre, Ser, ~~Y/Z~~, Rum, Bul, () Remove 1

ENGLAND Scott Hightower: (6) F Nth* S F Swe-Ska, F Swe-Ska*, F EngC-Bre*, F MAO* H, F Irls* S F MAO, A Mos* S GERMAN A Lvn-War

CENTERS: Home, Nwy, StP, ~~Y/Z~~, Bre, Mos (7) Build 1 (depending on German retreat)

FRANCE David Reynolds: (2) F Por* S F Spa, F Spa(sc)* S ITALIAN F Med-MidA (NSO)

CENTERS: Por, Spa (2) Even

GERMANY Bruce Schlickbernd: (8) F Ska-Nth /d/ R(Den, Nwy, OTB)*, F Bal-Swe*,

A Mur* ~~Y/Z~~, A Sil* S A Lvn-War, Lvn-War*, A Bre-Par*, A Bur*-Mar, A Gas*-Spa

CENTERS: Home, Den, Hol, Bel, Par, ~~Y/Z~~, WAR, StP (9) Build 1 (depending on retreat)

ITALY Mel Klein: (6) F Med* S FRENCH F Spa, F Aeg* S AUSTRIAN F Ion-EMed, F Tyrr-Tu, F Lyon* S A Mar, A Pied*-Tyro, A Mar* ~~Y/Z~~ FRENCH F Spa CTRS: Home, Tun, Vie, Mar (6)

RUSSIA C.D.: (1, 1 short) CENTER: ~~Y/Z~~ (0) out Even

TURKEY Jack Stewart: (4) F Bla* S A Sev, F Smy* S A Con, 1 Con* H, A Sev* H

CENTERS: Home, Sev (4) Even

Winter 1905 adjustments are due at 1900 hours, Tuesday, April 1

PRESS

HOT IN THE SADDLE: Von Schlickbernd, was about to give the signal to charge, when he abruptly leaped from his saddle in a howl of pain. His commanders rushed to him where he fell to the ground, moaning. "Damn, I should have been more careful; I sat right on my saddlepoint, and I'll tell you, that's sharp! Well, its back to Berlin to have this taken care of," he gestured towards the wound in his seat, "Dansk Whoreton, you are in command. Bring Erica der Hymen to me. And in once piece, mind you."

"Yes, sir," lowered Whoreton, slaverling in anticipation. "Alright, men charge and prepare to mount! In that order." The Germans thundered off the hill into Tyrolia, leaving the air decidedly clearer in Germany with their passing.

1974FA

SUMMER 1905: England A Lvp R Yor

FALL 1905

ENGLAND GONE.....AND THERE WERE FOUR!

ENGLAND Larry Rubinow: (1) NMR SOU A Yor*Hol via FRENCH F NthS (NSO) CTR: ~~Y/Z~~ (0) out

FRANCE David Reynolds: (8) F Edi* S F EngC-NthS, F NthS-Hol*, F Lvp* H, F Wal-Lon*,

F Med-Tyrr*, F EngC-NthS, A Bel* S F NthS-Hol, A Bur-Ruhr*

CENTERS: Home, Por, Spa, Bel, Edi, Lon, LVP, HOL (10) Build 2

GERMANY John Torrey: (11) F Nwy* S F Den-Nth, F Den*-Nth, A Pru-War*, A Sil* S

A Boh-Mun, A Boh-Mun*, A Lvn* S A Mos, A Gal* S A Bud, A Mos* H, A Bud* H,

A Swe* H, A Hol H /d/ R(Kiel, OTB)* CTRS: Home, Den, ~~Y/Z~~, Swe, War, Mos,

StP, Nwy, Bud (10) Remove 1

ITALY Gary Lempert: F Aeg*-Con, F Rome-Nap*, F Ion-EMed*, A Vie* S A Ven-Tri,

A Tri-Alb*, A Von-Tri* CTRS: Home, Tun, Tri, Vie (6) Even

TURKEY David Ayres: (8) F Bla*-Con, F Gre* H, A Bul* S A Rum, A Con-Smy*, A Sev* S

A Ukr, A Rum* S A Scr, A Ser* S A Rum, A Ukr* S A Rum

CENTERS: Home, Bul, Gre, Sev, Ser, Rum (8) Even

Winter 1905 adjustments are due at 1900 hours, Tuesday, April 1.

1974L

AUTUMN 1908: France A Pied R Mar

WINTER 1908

AUSTRIA: Even ENGLAND: Build A Edi, A Lvp, A Lon FRANCE: Build A Par

TURKEY: Build A Ank

Spring 1908 orders are due at 1900 hours, Tuesday, April 1.

